for wittier and more piquant entertainment among contemporary humanist poets. Padelford thought highly of Surrey's 'Yf he that erst the fourme': 'This epigram, with its trenchant final couplet giving an unexpected turn to the thought, is quite in the spirit of the best Renaissance tradition.'[54] In this movement from Bourbon to Surrey we find an important instance of how this humanist tradition was transmitted to early Tudor poets. The importance of the sources and fortune of neo-Latin poetry in the emergent tradition of the English epigram is beyond the scope of this essay. Equally, where Wyatt's and Surrey's poetry has been thought of as representing imitative responses to Italian, French, and Spanish writing, further work may reveal that the influence is sometimes, as in this case, the result of an intermediary Latin text. Studies of the richer French literary cultures in the second quarter of the sixteenth century emphasize the importance of bilateral exchange with the vernacular in the cultivation of humanistic receptivities. Nott, we remember, considered 'Au temps passé' the sole Surrey poem derived from a French source. Yet it was finally a French exponent of neo-Latin rather than vernacular poetry who was responsible for the unusual Hellenism of this English epigram.

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[54] Frederick Morgan Padelford, *The Poems of Henry Howard Earl of Surrey* (Seattle, 1928), p. 211.

Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*: Classical Translation and the Location of Cultural Authority

Victoria Moul

Tom Cain concludes his essay on the satiric force of *Poetaster* by remarking that it 'emerges as a play that demands a more prominent place in the Jonson canon than it is normally given'.[1] This essay is in part an attempt to attend to *Poetaster* as he suggests, and this attention takes two forms. First I think it is worth focusing upon the play as a work both composed of and in some sense *about* the act of translation; a work in which translations, as well as the translator, continually challenge us to consider their place in the office of the 'poet'.[2] *Poetaster* is, quite explicitly, about the negotiation of the social and aesthetic distinctions between 'poet' and 'poetaster', but it frames this debate within the broader allusive context of the similar negotiation in Horace's *Satires*. As an authorial strategy this is both aggressively self-confident (because it associates Jonson with Horace himself) and strikingly submissive (where is Jonson if so much of this is Horace?). Second, I want to use a fuller understanding of the allusive strategies of the play to put some pressure upon the prevailing critical consensus regarding its close. Although several critics have stressed the powerful role of the poets themselves in magnifying and shaping Augustus' authority, the view that the final scenes present an idyllic and equally balanced relationship

[1] Tom Cain, '"Satyres, That Girde and Fart at the Time": *Poetaster* and the Essex Rebellion', in *Refashioning Ben Jonson: Gender, Politics and the Jonsonian Canon*, edited by Julie Sanders, Kate Chedgzoy, and Susan Wiseman (Basingstoke, 1998), pp. 48–70 (p. 66). For support with this paper thanks are due to Colin Burrow and the AHRC.

[2] On this topic see Margaret Tudeau-Clayton, 'Scenes of Translation in Jonson and Shakespeare: *Poetaster*, *Hamlet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', *Translation and Literature*, 11 (2002), 1–23, and Margaret Tudeau-Clayton, *Jonson, Shakespeare and Early Modern Virgil* (Cambridge, 1998). Although in the course of this essay I wish to take issue with her conclusions about the perception and deployment of translation in Jonson's play, many of her observations are acute and her attention to the theme of translation itself is important.

between Horace, Virgil, and Augustus is very widespread.[3] In this paper I argue that the many 'translations' and allusions of the play help to put Augustus' taste and judgement in question, and finally subordinate even his majesty to the organizing – and immortalizing – power of Horatian verse. The real cultural authority of the play is invested not in him, nor even in Virgil, but rather in Horace, whose *Satires* structure the play as a whole, and inside whose authorial framework even the fragment of the *Aeneid* is held.

For all Virgil's acknowledged virtue and excellence, it is the adaptive and absorbent satiric mode, incorporating alike epic and lyric, Roman and Elizabethan material, which allows us to 'see' most clearly the dangers of absolute power, and the proper role of the poet as counsellor to the great. These political implications are moreover rooted in the details of the textual transactions around and through which the play is carried out, and which have been under-read by critics – in terms both of the extent to which *Poetaster* is indebted to other texts, and the extent to which these debts and borrowings structure the action.

Poetaster: A Translated Play

Virgil's eventual resounding endorsement of Horace's art and life alike refers specifically to his 'translating':

> And for his use of translating men,
> It still hath been a work of as much palm
> In clearest judgements, as t' invent or make.
> (V.3.359–61)[4]

Virgil is answering one after another the terms of the accusations against Horace, and he begins with that of 'translation'. The phrase 'translating men' is grammatically elusive; 'men who translate' could refer to the characters of Horace's *Satires*, although it is Jonson's versions of these characters in *Poetaster* who are noticeable for their 'translation' of material. We might also read 'men' as the object of 'translating', perhaps referring (again, to *Poetaster* rather than the historical Horace) to the wealth of imported material and characters in

[3] '[Virgil] stands at the absolute centre (with Augustus) of a circle of being/truth' (Tudeau-Clayton, *Jonson, Shakespeare and Early Modern Virgil*, p. 158). See also Lindsay M. Kaplan, *The Culture of Slander in Early Modern England*, edited by Stephen Orgel (Cambridge, 1997), p. 72. An instructive exception to this consensus is Alan Sinfield, '*Poetaster*, the Author, and the Perils of Cultural Production', *Renaissance Drama*, 27 (1996), 3–18. My phrase 'cultural authority' is derived from this essay.

[4] Quotations from *Poetaster* are taken throughout from Cain's edition: *Poetaster*, edited by Tom Cain (Manchester, 1995).

the play.[5] Horace does refer on several occasions to the sources of his work in Greek models (Archilochus at *E* I.19.24–5, Sappho and Alcaeus at *C* I.1.34), but nowhere is this imitation given as a ground for attack upon him. The accusation of *ad hominem* invective, by contrast, does have a textual basis (*S* I.4.33–8 and 78–9).[6]

The attack upon – and eventual defence of – Horace's 'translating' practice speaks much more directly to the reader of *Poetaster* than of the *Satires*, and the connection to Jonson is augmented by a similar juxtaposition of 'translate' and 'invent' towards the end of the *Conversations* with Drummond: 'his inventions are smooth and easie, but above all he excelleth in a translation'.[7] The Virgil of *Poetaster*, speaking of Horace, anticipates this assessment of Jonson's own poetic strengths. Demetrius Fannius' comically bad verse invective against Horace, read aloud by Tibullus earlier in V.3, uses the word in a derogatory fashion: 'And, but that I would not be thought a prater, / I could tell you he were a translator' (V.3.304–5). 'Translating' is also a term in Demetrius' initial attack (IV.3.120–1), and the final indictment in V.3, by which both Demetrius and Crispinus are condemned – in a scene which the very title of the play urges us to read as climactory – again refers to this accusation ('filching by translation', V.3.224–5).[8] The tension between these instances and Virgil's self-conscious echo of them in his vindication of Horace highlights the importance of the term to the play as a whole: by the closing scenes 'translation' has been firmly defined as art rather than plagiary.[9] Given the multiple correspondences between characters in the play (Ovid, Marlowe, and Aeneas; Julia and Dido; even, as we shall see, Ovid and Caesar himself), the phrase draws our attention to the pervasive presence of 'translation' (including 'imitation' and 'appropriation') in all its forms.

[5] Loewenstein is also interested in this phrase and remarks that by it, Virgil 'not only keeps alive the ambiguity of "translation," retaining inter-linguistic translation as a kind of leading case for a whole range of imitative practises, but … he also specifies the object of imitation as the emulable poets themselves'. Joseph Loewenstein, *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 121–2.

[6] References to Horace are to *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, edited by Edward C. Wickham (Oxford, 1901). *E* refers to the *Epistles*, *C* (*Carmina*) to the *Odes*, *S* to the *Satires*, and *AP* to the *Ars Poetica*. Translations are all my own.

[7] *Conversations with Drummond*, 693–4, in *Ben Jonson*, edited by C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols (Oxford, 1925–52; hereafter *H&S*), I, 151.

[8] *The Arraignment* is the alternative title to the play, and the one referred to by Envy in the Induction (3).

[9] 'Plagiarism' is also a term under contention in the play. The final indictment refers to both Crispinus and Demetrius as a 'plagiary' (V.3.211–12), presumably a reference to their apparent 'plagiarism' of Horace in IV.3.96–7 (discussed below).

At IV.3.120–3 Demetrius frames his grudge against Horace in terms which are very close to those of the final scene, and interestingly paradoxical: 'Ay, and tickle him i' faith for his arrogancy and his impudence in commending his own things, and for his translating. I can trace him i' faith.'[10] Horace's 'translating' is apparently so obvious that he can be 'traced' – tracked or scented out, as in hunting – with ease; but he is also guilty of commending his 'own things': poems, presumably, which despite their 'translation' are his own. If we read Horace as Jonson himself, then Demetrius' critique is in fact rather accurate: large sections of the play *are* made up from fragments of another author's work, whether strictly translated (that is, between languages) or directly 'carried across' from one author to another, as in the quotations and misquotations from contemporary dramatists that litter the play. But Jonson also returns time and again to the creative use of Jonson/Horace's 'own things' – that is, the *Satires* themselves.

The passages of Ovid and Virgil read aloud – and both times rudely interrupted – are, as every commentator concedes, extremely literal renderings of their Latin models.[11] But that 'literal' quality (to which I shall return) only serves to emphasize, by their very recognizability, that they *are* translations. Nor are these the only examples: the first three scenes of the third act of *Poetaster* derive both plot and dialogue from Horace's *Satires* I.1, and the – probably unperformed – fifth scene of this act is (another) very 'literal' translation of Horace's key defence of his genre in *Satires* II.1. Herford and Simpson also note that Crispinus' song at II.2.153–62 is loosely based upon Martial's Epigram I.57.[12] Ovid's burlesque farewell scene draws upon Ovid's own *Tristia* as well as echoing *Romeo and Juliet*.[13] Many of the details of the divine banquet of IV.5 are drawn from no less a source than the first book of the *Iliad*.[14] The Ovidian passage is, moreover, something akin to the 'filching' of a 'translation': it varies only slightly from Marlowe's version of these lines in his edition of the *Elegies* – one form of 'translation' nested within another.[15]

Moving from interlingual 'translation' or imitation to the 'carrying across' of literary material, the second half of *Poetaster* III.4 is a

[10] A similar charge is levelled against Crites (*Cynthia's Revels*, III.2.60–2).
[11] *Poetaster* I.1.43–83 (Ovid, *Amores* I.15) and V.2.56–97 (Virgil, *Aeneid* IV.160–88).
[12] *H&S*, IX, 548; see also *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 119.
[13] See *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 204.
[14] See *H&S*, IX, 567–8, and discussion below.
[15] The edition in question, published with John Davies' *Epigrams*, was one of those proscribed and burnt following the 'Bishops' Ban' of 1599. For a fuller discussion, see *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 53 n. 41.

patchwork of borrowings from other contemporary plays, as the actors offer a medley of their repetoire. Identified sources include Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, and *The Battle of Alcazar*, although the exact references of several other passages are now obscure.[16] The dress and demeanour of the actors would certainly have helped the audience to recognize the sources in question. Finally, and most memorably, in V.3 Horace 'purges' Crispinus and Demetrius of vocabulary derived from Marston and Dekker respectively (with traces of Shakespeare and Hall).

Thus Demetrius himself is hardly exempt from the 'translation' of which he accuses Horace; his own literary style is in some sense 'translated'. More significantly, his complaint in IV.3 (cited above) forms part of a network of ironies in the surrounding lines which turn upon the issues of translation and plagiary – and specifically, 'translation' (in various forms) from Horace himself. It is not only the song of IV.3.68–79 that is apparently 'borrowed' (96) from Horace; its dedication to 'Canidia' is also an (inappropriate) adoption – Canidia is, as Gallus points out, 'Horace his witch' (95). Most strikingly of all, Tucca's indignant horror at the suggestion that Crispinus has borrowed from Horace (98–9) is belied by Tucca himself in his next intervention (108–18). The greater part of that speech is lifted direct from Horace's *Satires* – Tucca is here playing the part of the satirist's critic from *S* I.4.34–8, a critic in this case who uses Horace's own portrait of a critic, and indeed his own words, to attack Horace for, among other things, copying others.

Nor do the ironies of Tucca's speech end there; Cain marks the imitation of *S* I.4 as extending from lines 109 ('fly him …') to 115 ('not a bawd or a boy that comes from the bake-house but shall point at him') of *Poetaster* IV.3. In fact, Horace's carping critic of the *Satires* claims not that every slave-boy or old woman ('et pueros et anus', 38) will 'point at' the poet, but rather that the poet longs for them all to know of his work (that is, his attacks upon others). The sense of that clause is translated by Tucca's previous remark: 'What he once drops upon paper against a man lives eternally to upbraid him in the mouth of every slave tankard-bearer or water-man' (111–13).

But the grammar of the passage is unclear; for the most part, 'he' refers clearly to Horace himself. According to the logic of the allusion, the 'him' of 'upbraid him' in line 112 should refer not to Horace but to the 'man' he attacks in his satire, as should the final 'him' of the

[16] Cain notes lines 227–9 and 233–8 as other instances of allusions to plays which cannot now be traced.

sentence ('point at him', 115). But since the sentence began unambiguously with *Horace* as the subject, the reference of these pronouns is cast into doubt. Tucca has in fact conflated *S* I.4.34–8 with another passage of Horace of very different tenor. At *C* IV.3.21–3, at the height of his fame, Horace addresses Melpomene: 'totum muneris hoc tui est, / quod monstror digito praetereuntium / Romanae fidicen lyrae' ('it is entirely by your grace that I am pointed out by passers-by as Rome's lyric poet'). This last is a declaration, not of the poet's unpopularity, but rather of exactly the opposite. Tucca's confused conflation of Horace's own words writes into the scene Horace's eventual lyric supremacy.

In fact, the extent of the play's dependence upon Horace's 'own things' is more substantial than has been noted. The scene mentioned above is embedded in the developing plot by a series of references to the *Satires* which pervades *Poetaster*, and which reaches beyond the obvious, close, and extended versions of *S* I.9 and II.1. It is this sustained engagement to which I now turn.

Poetaster and the *Satires* of Horace

In *Poetaster* IV.3, as we have seen, Tucca is cast as an anonymous critic from Horace's own fourth satire; this identification of the 'poetasters' of the play with characters from the *Satires* is consistent throughout. Hermogenes Tigellius derives his name from Horace, and the running joke of II.2 – that Hermogenes refuses to sing when asked, but once begun, refuses to stop – is a dramatization of the opening lines of *S* I.3, in which Tigellius is named (lines 3–4) as an example of this tendency among singers:

> omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus, inter amicos
> ut numquam inducant animum cantare rogati,
> iniussi numquam desistant.
>
> (1–3)[17]

Accordingly Hermogenes repeatedly refuses to sing between lines 106 and 122 ('Cannot sing … Thank you Madam, but will not sing') of

[17] 'Singers all share this vice. Among friends, when they're asked to sing, they never agree. When no-one suggests it they won't stop.' Hermogenes is named at *S* I.3.129 (identified as a 'cantor'); I.9.25; I.10.18. Tigellius is mentioned at *S* I.2.3, I.3.4, and I.10.90. The names are brought together at I.4.72 and I.10.80. Brown, following earlier critics, distinguishes between the (apparently already dead) Tigellius of *S* I.2 and I.3 and the man named in I.4.9–10, but Jonson clearly collapsed them in creating the cast of *Poetaster. Horace: Satires I*, edited by P. Michael Brown (Warminster, 1993), p. 126.

Poetaster II.2, and Tibullus articulates Horace's point: 'Tut, the only way to win him, is to abstain from entreating him' (123–4). But once goaded into it by Crispinus he refuses to stop: 'You shall hear me sing another; now will I begin' (181); 'Why 'tis but a short air; 'twill be done presently, pray stay; strike music' (185–6). Just in case we have missed the allusion, Julia reiterates the point, translating the first line of the Latin cited above: ''Tis the common disease of all your musicians that they know no mean to be entreated, either to begin or end' (188–9).

Crispinus, too, has his roots in Horace. The name, characterized as 'ineptum', appears in the poem in question (*S* I.3.138–9) and recurs several times in *Satires* I (compare I.1.120, I.4.14). Jonson has taken the name (and perhaps that suggestive 'ineptum') and conflated him with the unnamed 'pest' of *S* I.9 (who also claims to be a poet). This conflation is foreshadowed, for the alert reader, in the second act. Hermogenes' ungenerous response to Crispinus' poetic performance is to remark 'Sir, all this doth not yet make me envy you, for I know I sing better than you' (II.2.166–7). At *S* I.9.25 the unnamed 'pest' claims: 'invideat quod et Hermogenes ego canto' ('What I sing, even Hermogenes might envy'). The remark characterizes the pervasive envy of the circles in which Hermogenes and Crispinus move (in contrast to Horace and Virgil's generous mutual praise), but it also affirms the connection between Horace's 'pest' and the Crispinus of *Poetaster*. The early establishment of this connection adds to the irony at the beginning of *Poetaster* III.1, when Crispinus, newly decided to become a poet, catches sight of Horace and exclaims ''Slid, yonder's Horace! They say he's an excellent poet … I think he be composing as he goes i' the street!' (3–6). Crispinus is as it were already speaking from inside Horace's own poem: he is himself the composition he hears 'Horace' singing.

A similar extended engagement with the *Satires* occurs in V.3 – the scene with which we began, and which includes Caesar's defence of Horace's 'translating men'. Lines 447–54, in which Horace is generously quick to forgive Demetrius, are a version of *S* I.10.81–90, a passage which drops the names of a string of Roman worthies, as well as 'compluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos / prudens praetereo' (87–8).[18] Jonson has rewritten Horace's cast of friends to include Gallus, Tibullus, and 'the best-best Caesar' (in Horace it is Virgil who is 'optimus' at *S* I.6.55); but Jonson's abbreviated introduction ('Envy me still', 448) invokes the list of the unworthy to whom he is immune

[18] 'And several others, learned types and friends whom I carefully pass over.' Compare V.3.450–1: 'While these, with many more, whose names I wisely slip.'

(*S* I.10.76–80) – a list which precedes this passage in the Latin, and which includes a cast of names (Demetrius, Hermogenes, Tigellius) familiar from *Poetaster*. The significance of this scene is reinforced by Demetrius' admission, immediately before, that it was Horace's social as well as poetic superiority that roused his envy:

> *Demetris.* In troth, no great cause [for maligning Horace], not I, I must confess, but that he kept better company for the most part than I, and that better men loved him than loved me, and that his writings thrived better than mine and were better liked and graced. Nothing else.
>
> (V.3.441–5)[19]

The correspondences between the two 'casts' extend beyond mere names. In Horace *S* I.4, the poet describes all the kinds of men who, prey to a range of vices and hence vulnerable to satiric attack, 'fear verses, hate poets' (*S* I.4.33).[20] It is in this passage, too, that Albius is mentioned by name (28).[21] The vices listed in *S* I.4.26–30 include avarice, wretched ambition, lust for both married women and boys, infatuation with silver and bronze, and relentless preoccupation with business. It is noticeable that the villains of the play between them demonstrate all of these faults: Tucca is preoccupied by money owed to him (for example at I.2.180–3), Albius with enhancing his social standing (II.1), and Albius' undiscerning greed for gain is accentuated with an allusion to Juvenal (II.1.52–6; Juvenal 14.203–5). Crispinus takes Tucca to meet Chloe, a married woman (III.5.373–4) and Tucca, in front of her husband, implies either adultery or rape (IV.3.27–9, see also Cain's note). Chloe herself desires Crispinus: at IV.3.150, she checks that Crispinus (as Mercury) 'has to do' with her own character, Venus. Tucca at III.4.276–8 presumes that Histrio will prostitute the child actors; even Ovid, acting Jupiter, refers to a child as Ganymede (IV.5.59) and flirts with Chloe (as Venus) in front of his wife (IV.5.86–7).

The final poem of Book I of Horace's *Satires* ends by turning from a discussion of poetic style to a division of possible readers into two

[19] Compare Demetrius' poem read out by Tibullus earlier in the scene, which also attacks Horace first for his poetry (V.3.304–7) and then 'that he keeps gallants company' (311).

[20] This line immediately precedes the imaginary critic's attack, lines 34–8, a version of which Tucca repeats at IV.3.108–18.

[21] Albius is mentioned in Horace for his greed for bronze-collecting (*S* I.4.74–8) – note his admiration of 'great gilt andirons' at *Poetaster* II.1.131. Both of Demetrius Fannius' names are also derived from the *Satires* (*S* I.4.21, I.10.18, I.10.78–80), where he is associated with Hermogenes Tigellius. Cain notes the textual origin of these names, although he does not discuss further Jonson's recreation of the milieu hinted at by Horace.

groups. Gallus and Tibullus move in the course of the play from the dubious margins of Ovid's circle – which Crispinus, Hermogenes, Albius, and Tucca were allowed to enter in the banquet scene – to Horace's in Act V (and, as it were, *S* I.10). In the course of *Poetaster*, a play plotted and structured by the *Satires*, we discover who are the poets and who the poetasters, but also the extent to which this aesthetic failure is associated with ethical vice.

We are left in no doubt that the work as a whole – rather than just 'Horace' himself – is Horatian, and this impression is confirmed when we notice that Virgil has already in *Poetaster* V.3 spoken 'Horace's lines'. Virgil's defence of Horace, with which we began, goes on to claim:

> the scorn
> Of humble baseness oftentimes so works
> In a high soul upon the grosser spirit,
> That to his blearèd and offended sense
> There seems a hideous fault blazed in the object,
> When only the disease is in his eyes.
> Here-hence it comes our Horace now stands taxed
> Of impudence, self-love and arrogance
>
> (V.3.343–50)

Although not exactly equivalent, the lines are a version of *S* I.3.25–7 on the double standard friends employ in assessing others' faults as opposed to their own: 'cum tua pervideas oculis mala lippus inunctis, / cur in amicorum vitiis tam cernis acutum / quam aut aquila aut serpens Epidaurius?'[22]

Virgil, in his defence of Horace, speaks in Horace's words. The metaphor of the bleared eyes – the imperfect vision (both moral and aesthetic) of Horace's critics – is given as an explanation as to why Horace comes to be so unfairly charged; but it is also, in Virgil's mouth, an instance of the tendency to translate others' words for which Horace is reproached by those same critics ('And for his use of translating men', 359). That same tendency which, Virgil claims, is just as worthy of adulation as 't' invent or make' if viewed with '*clearest* judgements' (361, italics mine) – a subtle and appropriate echo of the visual metaphor. Virgil's endorsement is an important moment of justification (much more significant, as we shall see, than Caesar's approval); but it is also, we are meant to notice, scripted by Horace himself. I shall return to

[22] 'Since you scrutinize your own sins through bleared eyes, covered in ointment, why in examining friends' faults are you as keen-eyed as an eagle or a Epidaurian snake?' Being 'blear-eyed' (*lippus*) is associated specifically with Crispinus at the close of the first satire (*S* I.1.120–1).

further examples of this Horatian 'scripting', even of Virgil, in the latter part of the essay.

The cumulative force of translation – linguistic transferral – in the play is not, however, limited to Jonson's insistent self-fashioning *as* Horace – the repeated tumbling of the other characters into unwitting Horatianism, mouthing Horace's words even as they attempt to decry Horace for his readiness to mouth the words of others. Jonson's various modes of translation in *Poetaster* also destabilize the figure of Caesar, and the apparently 'ideal' relationship of shared and mutually assured authority between Caesar and the poets at the end of the play – a relationship which has been received largely at face value by critics. Margaret Tudeau-Clayton, in the most extended attempt to link the translation practice of the play with its depiction of the relationship between poetry and power in the (nascent) imperial court, compares the scene in which Virgil reads from his *Aeneid* to Shakespearean translation scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She claims that while the Shakespearean scenes are 'expanding the sense of the English tongue ... in contrast, Jonson's scene of translation in *Poetaster* projects (in the sense of working for as well as imagining/seeing) the naturalization of a bounded, single, stable, and transcendent authorial identity as well as a stable, "purified", and bounded vernacular – a vernacular "owned" by a socio-political elite (Virgil's stage audience) and regulated by the linguistic practices of the poet/translator at its centre'.[23] There is certainly something impressively controlling and pointed about the wealth of importing going on in this play, the confidence involved not only in staging onself as Horace, but a version of Horace who gets everyone else's lines too. But in the context of the insistent appropriation of others' work, in so many different forms, throughout the play, combined with the centrality of 'translation' and 'filching' to the charge levelled against the character Horace, this appropriation hardly seems to be 'stable'. The sheer self-consciousness and exuberance of this various 'translating' challenges Tudeau-Clayton's sense that the play presents a 'naturalization' of this controlled authorial persona, in which the act of translation itself has become somehow 'transparent'. More than this, not only is translation in the play highly self-conscious, it is also repeatedly directed towards the destabilization of Caesar's centrality in the final scenes. It is this aspect to which I now turn.

[23] Tudeau-Clayton, 'Scenes of Translation', 4.

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Horace *Satires* II.1 and Caesar's 'attentive ear'

The most extended scene of literal, interlingual translation 'internal' to *Poetaster* – that is, not presented dramatically *qua* translation, unlike the passages of Virgil and Ovid – is undoubtedly III.5, the reworking of Horace's *Satire* II.1. Although often remarked upon, it has generally been condemned dramatically. But this strikingly close translation, in a play riven with translation and adaption, is very far from being 'transparent'. Although several critics have noted the expansion of line 100, where Jonson glosses the Latin *scribam* (*S* II.1.60) as 'I will write satires still, in spite of fear', this is in fact just one of a collection of alterations or expansions of the Latin sense which here, as so often, serve to instensify in Jonson's version the threat in Trebatius' words.

Satires II.1 is a programmatic poem which sets out many of the themes to unfold in Horace's second Book. The poem is also, and significantly, a key text for Horace's (and, by adoption, Jonson's) *recusatio*, and Jonson's version does not tone down this aspect of the poem; if anything it is heightened.[24] In fact, Cain reads the translations of Virgilian epic and Ovidian elegy incorporated in the play *as* a form of (Horatian) recusatio. Although he does not go on to follow up this very suggestive idea, and nor does he relate, as he might usefully have done, this 'large-scale' *recusatio* to the inclusion of III.5 itself, his comment points the way to much of what I hope to draw out.[25] The conventional *recusatio* of II.1 is set up in lines 10–12 of the Latin by Trebatius' suggestion: 'aude / Caesaris invicti res dicere, multa laborum / praemia laturus' ('dare to tell the deeds of unconquered Caesar; you'll carry off many prizes for your labours'). Lines 19–36 of Jonson's version – Horace's reply and the ensuing exchange – are at several points substantially expanded versions of the Latin text, although critics have not remarked upon this. The first of these additions comes at line 25 of the English, where, after the conventional brief demonstration of the epic skill the poet claims not to possess, Jonson's Horace adds: 'Great Caesar's wars cannot be fought with words.' The line bears no relation to any part of the Latin. Moreover, it adds a suprising edge to the standard *recusatio* formula, which depends upon claiming, rather, that Caesar's wars cannot be

[24] On the *recusatio* of lines 10–20 see *Horace: Satires II*, edited by Frances Muecke (Warminster, 1993), pp. 99–104. Muecke points out that this early example of an Augustan *recusatio* incorporates all the stock features of the topos (p. 103). The *recusatio* – a trope in which the poet, claiming modesty, declines to glorify his ruler in epic verse, yet takes the opportunity for a short demonstration of his, in fact, accomplished ability to write just that kind of verse if he so chose – lies at the heart of the delicate negotations betwe en poet and patron in Augustan verse.

[25] See *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 12.

fought with *my* words (although actually I could if I wanted to). Jonson here is typically deft and sure-footed in his negotiation of the classical trope, but cannot resist going one stage further. In the weakest sense, Jonson's added line facilely claims that words cannot fight a war for us. But there remains beneath the surface the suggestion of another meaning: that words – poetry – cannot be used to do *this* specific thing; that is, fight *Caesar's* wars, in the form of imperial epic.

The sense of confrontation between the poet's literary power and the emperor's demands is heightened in Jonson's translation by his tendency to limit the dissonance between legal and literary vocabulary (a feature of the Latin poem), while writing into the text an insistence on the poet's power and authority more pointed than the Latin original. In the opening lines of the scene, the ambiguous force of the Latin *legem*, oscillating between legal and aesthetic 'law', is lost in Jonson's version, in which the meaning is clearly literary: 'And past a satire's law t'extend my power' (2). On the other hand, his translation of *opus* (the standard word for a literary work) as 'power' suggests that the poet has failed to *limit* his 'power' as is proper in a lowly genre. The following two lines (3–4) present the *opposite* literary vice, translated by Jonson by the implication that Horace's work *fails* to 'eternise' itself ('Wants pith and matter to eternise it', 4). There is no term corresponding to 'eternise' in the Latin text. Just as in the original, Jonson's Horace is incapable of winning the argument – because either raising or lowering his tone will be criticized – but the terms in which his 'not winning' are framed have been crucially altered. Rather than a quibble between literary and legal 'law', the reader is encouraged to think in terms of the poet's capacity ('power') to immortalize, and his proper deployment of that potential.

At line 16 of the Latin Trebatius responds to Horace's refusal to write military epic with a straight-faced suggestion that he could still praise Caesar's virtues. Jonson's version expands the line to emphasize more clearly the distinction between the options – they have become specifically peacetime virtues in contrast to the martial themes of epic: 'Yet what his virtue *in his peace* affords, / His fortitude and justice, thou canst show' (*Poetaster* III.5.26–7, italics mine). Horace's reply, in the Latin, is a dextrous sidestep: 'Indeed I shall not fail myself, / When the material is available' (17–18). Apparently a form of courteous agreement, it is however not clear what 'not failing oneself' might amount to; nor indeed can we be sure that such material will *ever* present itself. Jonson's Horace replies: 'Of that my powers shall suffer no neglect, / When such slight labours may aspire respect' (30). 'Slight labours' has no correspondence in the Latin. On the one hand the poet celebrates the thought that such a pleasant and therefore un-arduous ('slight') task

might gain him favour. But there is more than a hint here that any attempt to write about Caesar's peaceful virtue might find itself rather short of material ('*slight* labours').

The 'great' of III.5.25 is moreover echoed ominously at line 102, where, although not a complete interpolation, it again expands upon the Latin. Horace's lines *S* II.1.60–2 form the climax of the satire: the point at which Horace declares most clearly that he will continue to write ('quisquis erit vitae, scribam, color', 60) and Trebatius makes the threat to the headstrong poet most explicit (60–2). That threat is thereafter progressively obscured by Horace's rehearsal of constructive satire, of which the powerful Scipio and Laelius actually approved, followed by Trebatius' final amused concession. Trebatius' wording at this central point is carefully vague: 'maiorum ne quis amicus / frigore te feriat' (61–2); Jonson's version is equally non-specific: 'And that some great man's friend will be thy death' (III.5.102). Nevertheless, Jonson's replacement of the plural (*maiorum* – a friend of those more important than you) with the singular 'some great man's friend', and the echo of the earlier phrase 'great Caesar', adds a threatening edge: there is a suggestion that the 'great man' in question may be Caesar himself.

Alan Sinfield, writing of Virgil's defence of Horace in Act V, comments that that speech 'effaces what actually makes malicious interpretations so crucial: the regime of state terror that depends upon a system of informers and arbitrary penalties'.[26] The shadow of that threat – the non-specific 'frigor' the satiric poet risks at the hands of 'some great man's friend' – is visible in Horace's encounter with Trebatius in III.5. Sinfield is right to point out that the same looming presence is discernible, too, in the terms of Horace's response at *Poetaster* V.3.57–63:

> A just man cannot fear, thou foolish tribune,
> Not though the malice of traducing tongues,
> The open vastness of a tyrant's ear,
> The senseless rigour of the wrested laws,
> Or the red eyes of strained authority,
> Should, in a point, meet all to take his life.
> His innocence is armour 'gainst all these.

But the link is more than just thematic. Connecting these sections is a powerful allusive association, also traceable elsewhere in the play. The lines cited above are identified by *H&S* as alluding to Horace *C* III.3.1–8, and the parallel structure (although not the details) of the two passages is clear enough. The mention of 'traducing tongues' (one

[26] Sinfield (n. 3), p. 9.

thinks of Lupus) and of the 'senseless rigour of the wrested laws' (Trebatius comes to mind) are appropriate to the plot as it has so far unfolded. But the 'open vastness of a tyrant's ear' is reminiscent, too, of Caesar's 'attentam ... aurem' at *S* II.1.19. The combination of this image of Caesar's expectant attention with examples of verbal dishonesty – whether malice or flattery – is one which recurs uncomfortably throughout the play.

In this regard it is worth returning to *Poetaster* III.5, and to Jonson's version of the Latin lines in question, which once again offer a substantial expansion upon the original:

> But if I watch not a most chosen time,
> The humble words of Flaccus cannot climb
> Th' attentive ear of Caesar. Nor must I
> With less observance shun gross flattery,
> For he, reposèd safe in his own merit,
> Spurns back the glozes of a fawning spirit.
> (III.5.31–6)

> nisi dextro tempore Flacci
> verba per attentam non ibunt Caesaris aurem,
> cui male si palpere, recalcitret undique tutus.
> (*S* II.1.18–20)

('Unless it's the right moment, Flaccus' words won't reach Caesar's pricked ear, and if you stroke him clumsily, he'll kick out all around to keep himself safe' [or: 'even though he's safe'])

The simple 'tutus' of the Latin (20) has been expanded into 'reposèd safe in his owne merit' (35). Both versions carry an ironic force, though the irony is working differently. The final word of line 20, Horace's *tutus*, fatally undermines the already uncomfortably irreverent image of Caesar built up in the preceding line – a Caesar who must be properly 'stroked' (*palpere*, 20), since the wrong handling will cause him to 'kick out all around' (*recalcitret undique*, 20). The wary language of horse-breaking – and the implied necessity of flattery under the guise of careful handling – is suprising; but that final *tutus* reveals Caesar's swiftness to anger as paranoia: all the time he is perfectly 'safe'.[27]

The ambiguous heart of the passage comes at lines 33–4 of the English, in which the double negatives and tortuous circumlocution leave Jonson's meaning poised uncertainly between opposite extremes. 'With less observance' is an adverbial clause meant to be taken with

[27] The final position of the nominative adjective *tutus* admits of either a proleptic ('to keep himself safe') or a concessive ('although he is safe') reading.

'shun': Jonson's Horace is saying 'I must not shun gross flattery with any less care than I give to waiting for the best time', that is, 'I must be very careful to avoid gross flattery.' But the sentence teeters upon the verge of saying: 'I must not ('nor must I') be so careless as to shun gross flattery' – that is, 'I must assiduously continue to flatter.' With that hidden meaning present, if just out of sight, the flattery of 'reposed safe in his owne merit', and the explicit mention of the 'fawning spirit' in the final lines, acquire an added ironic edge.

A similar juxtaposition of the prince's 'safety' and the receptivity of his 'ear' is found in Act IV. Maecenas caps Horace's condemnation of Lupus by suggesting that Caesar will act on it. His pronouncement uneasily suggests that his own trust in Caesar's judgement is not absolute – note the 'I hope' (27):

> *Maecenas.* Caesar doth know it, wolf, and to his knowledge,
> He will, I hope, reward your base endeavours.
> Princes that will but hear, or give access
> To such officious spies, can ne'er be safe:
> They take in poison with an open ear,
> And, free from danger, become slaves to fear.
> (IV.8.26–31)[28]

Maecenas makes clear that the 'safety' of the over-suspicious prince is no real security, and the acuity of his remark is revealed in the final engagement with this topos towards the end of the play. At the climactic moment of betrayal in Act V, Caesar's response to Lupus' interruption (V.3.15–17) similarly engages with this Latin passage ('We have no vacant ear'). Tellingly, it is Lupus' appeal to Caesar's *safety* ('thine own safety', 19–20) which makes Caesar change his mind ('The life of Caesar? Let him enter', 24). For all his apparently enthralled attention to the description of the wicked 'fama', Caesar is slow to recognize the personification of that monster when it intrudes into his own court. Caesar's failure here is one of judgement, but it is also specifically (and ominously) a failure of that particular kind of combined aesthetic and moral discernment which would allow him to see the connection between the literature he admires and the political realities of the court. In this network of parallels, Jonson has connected Caesar's

[28] In the lines preceding, Horace accuses Lupus of 'pretending / To be the props and columns of his [Caesar's] safety, / The guards unto his person and his peace' (IV.8.21–3). The power of this accusation is augmented by the fact that Horace's vocabulary recalls several instances of the historical Horace's tribute to Maecenas, as protector both of himself (*C* II.17.3–4, 'columen'; *C* I.12, 'praesidium') and, significantly, of Caesar (*Epode* 1.3–4: 'paratus omne Caesaris periculum / subire, Maecenas, tuo'). The allusive resonance helps to reinforce the significance of Maecenas' closing remarks.

susceptibility to flattery – one kind of verbal deceit, hung upon Caesar's ear at *Satires* II.1 – with an equally dangerous readiness to listen to malicious lies. Although Caesar does finally dismiss and condemn Lupus, and clear Horace, this pattern of doubts about the possible dangers of (epic) flattery as well as the base malice of the inept poetaster continue to speak throughout the final scenes. We can never quite trust Caesar, because he remains *this* Caesar, the Caesar of the 'attentam ... aurem', ready for all his safety to 'kick out all around' if not handled quite carefully enough.

We have seen the extent to which *Poetaster* is structured around 'translation' understood in its broadest sense: not only the most explicit passages taken from Ovid and Virgil, but myriad details of plot, dialogue, or song, as well as whole scenes, are defined by their relationship to other texts. Repeatedly, the most structurally significant texts – the ones from which the action takes its lead – are Horace's *Satires*; as has been shown, the characters 'participate in', in some sense act out, the content of these poems throughout the play. And it is, ironically, the character of Horace who is accused – and acquitted – of 'translation' which amounts to stealing. The overall impression of 'Horace' as guiding author is powerful; an author, moreover, authoritative enough to incorporate examples of genres outside his own (Virgil and his epic; Ovid's elegy). The fact of this structural primacy, once its extent is realized, sets even the final scenes of Caesar's (and the other poets') endorsement of Virgil within an overarching Horatianism. But if our confidence in Caesar's ability to distinguish between flattery and sincerity, malicious informing and real loyalty, is thereby impaired, the final scenes do still seem to express Caesar's respect for, and excellent taste in, poetry and the power of the poet – especially the epic poet, Virgil. Given Jonson's consistent tendency to associate ethical goodness with aesthetic excellence or good taste, this too deserves further scrutiny.

Virgil's *Aeneid* and Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*

Helgerson remarks of Virgil in *Poetaster* that '[His] very perfection put him out of reach. He is in his way as distant from Horace, and thus from Jonson, as was Ovid.'[29] I want to put some pressure upon this assumption, and consider the ways in which Virgil is in fact caught up

[29] Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the Literary System* (Berkeley, 1984), p. 113.

in the structures, both textual and political, that pervade the play, overlaying his apparent 'perfection' with associations borrowed both (suprisingly) from the Ovid/Marlowe figure of *Poetaster*, and from Horace himself.

Virgil's much-anticipated entrance in Act V, and his recitation from the fourth Book of the *Aeneid*, is heralded by Caesar as climactic: here, at last, is true poetry; the moral and artistic version of the perfection Ovid claimed that Julia represented, but with the crucial distinction that the virtue of Virgil, and of his poetry, is in some sense real. This expectation weighs upon Virgil's eventual appearance, and especially upon the passage of the *Aeneid* which Jonson has him recite – a close translation[30] which in its position towards the end of the play echoes, and invites comparison with, Ovid's recitation of *Amores* I.15 in the opening scene.[31]

The story of Dido and Aeneas' doomed and destructive love, rendered disastrous by the interference of rumour, has obvious similarities to the story of Ovid and Julia.[32] The divisive and dangerous role of 'fama' – which exaggerates the sin in reporting it to Iarbas – has equally evident relevance to this play in which Horace himself will shortly be denounced unfairly. Virgil pointedly breaks off with 'this monster' as Lupus bursts onto the stage, although Caesar, as noted above, fails to make the connection. The erotic threat to epic purpose, as well as the associative link between the newly banished Ovid and Aeneas, the founder of Rome, makes a tempting case for reading Jonson's selection of this passage as another kind of buried *recusatio* within the broader Horatian framework: a refusal to write epic or fully condone it, even when dramatizing Virgil.[33]

But this straightforward interpretation of the choice of passage to accord with a broader reading of *recusatio* in the play is problematized by the great popularity of the Dido books throughout the Middle Ages

[30] A note on Jonson's borrowings from previous English versions of *Aeneid* IV in this passage is forthcoming in *T&L*; I have therefore not considered this feature here, though it is of some significance for my subject.

[31] Note that within the play the choice of a passage is determined by a version of the *sortes Virgilianae* (V.2.47), adding to the sense of significance; a passage from Book IV also accords with Donatus' report that Virgil's eventual agreement to show Caesar his work extended only to Books II, IV, and VI.

[32] For the relationship, see for instance Lindsay Kaplan, *The Culture of Slander* (n. 3), p. 77.

[33] See *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 12. As John Watkins demonstrates in *The Specter of Dido: Spenser and Virgilian Epic* (New Haven, 1995), pp. 2–6, there was a strong Renaissance tradition of reading, or (re)writing, Dido as a generic threat.

and Renaissance, and their position at the heart of Renaissance debates about the meaning and role of poetry itself.[34] A moralized reading of the *Aeneid*, which viewed Book IV as central both poetically and didactically, was commonplace in Jonson's own day. The folio edition of Virgil's *Works* owned by Jonson introduces Book IV in just these terms.[35] To this extent, then, Jonson's deployment of the passage can be taken at face value, as an example of Virgil at his (widely-acknowledged) best, his most affecting, and therefore most effective; offering an excellent lesson in moral restraint and purpose – a perfect balance to Ovid's demonstration of debased, albeit eloquent, sensuality.

But as well as editions and commentaries, a further index of contemporary reception of the Dido story is its incorporation or development in original literature. In this respect, Marlowe's play *Dido, Queen of Carthage* comes to mind, and doubly so when we remember that the *topos* of a misguided but irresistible love affair is constructed to echo the subplot concerning Ovid and Julia – Ovid who begins the play by reciting 'his' verse in a translation recognizably derived from Marlowe's versions of the *Amores*.[36] Ovid's exuberant language in the scenes of parting from Julia is frequently Marlovian, and Tom Cain characterizes Ovid's closing epigraph as 'Marlovian/Chapmanesque'.[37]

The divine banquet scene of *Poetaster* (IV.5), in which Ovid, Julia, Gallus, Tibullus, and the rest dress up as divinities, resembles both in structure and tone the opening scene of *Dido*.[38] Both plays were written

[34] In general, as Watkins outlines, a writer who believed that poetry's prime purpose is not to edify would defend Dido (as Ovid did) or parody the passage (*Specter of Dido*, p. 4).

[35] 'Of them all, this book is considered by everyone, even by the ancients, the most elegant ... in it [this book] Virgil most greatly displayed his genius ... and he did this, so that minds desirous and intent upon honesty might shrink from it [the content of the plot] with even greater care.' Jacob Pontanus, *Symbolarum Libri XVII quibus P. Virgilii Maronis Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis, ex probatissimis auctoribus declarantur, comparantur, illustrantur* (Augsburg, 1599), fascimile reprint (New York, 1976), columns 1105–8; translation mine. For Jonson's library see David McPherson, 'Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue', *SP*, 71 (1974), 3–106.

[36] *Dido* was published in quarto in 1594. The title page mentions Thomas Nashe as well as Marlowe as author, but the play is now considered to be very largely, if not wholly, Marlowe's work. Described by Loewenstein as 'Marlowe's pioneering attempt to find a popular theatrical idiom for neo-classical imitation' (*Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship*, p. 87), it is an important precedent to *Poetaster*. References are to *Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, Vol. 1: *All Ovids elegies, Lucans first booke, Dido Queene of Carthage, Hero and Leander*, edited by Roma Gill (Oxford, 1987).

[37] *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 23.

[38] In Jonson's version, Ovid plays Jupiter, Julia is Juno, Gallus Apollo, Cytheris Pallas Athene, Tibullus Bacchus, Plautia Ceres, Albius Vulcan, and Chloe Venus. Finally, Tucca is offered the part of Mars and Crispinus of Mercury.

for, and performed by, the children's company at Blackfriars.[39] Marlowe's arresting divine 'framework' for his version of the *Aeneid* is ostensibly justified by Virgil's passing allusion to the source of Juno's hostility towards the Trojans (and especially Aeneas) in Jupiter's habitual infidelity.[40] Both versions of classical divinity are irreverent and anthropomorphic; both focus upon Jupiter's infidelity and Juno's jealousy, although in Marlowe's version Juno is not on stage – her jealousy only reported – and Jupiter's lasciviousness is aimed solely at the boy Ganymede.

The 'divine' scenes in both plays share a common source in *Iliad*, Book XV. Irritated with his wife for her interference on the Greeks' behalf at Troy, Zeus threatens Hera and reminds her of how he bound her and suspended her among the clouds. Marlowe's Jupiter promises to punish Juno for striking Ganymede in much the same terms.[41] In *Poetaster*, Ovid, playing Jupiter, also threatens Julia (as Hera) with violence (IV.5.104–5; 114–15; 122–7), but the specifically Homeric threat is Julia's, not Ovid's:

> I will find fault with thee, King Cuckold-Maker! ... By my godhead, Jupiter, I will join with all the other gods here, bind thee hand and foot, throw thee down into earth, and make a poor poet of thee, if thou abuse me thus.
>
> (IV.5.96–102)

This is not the only point of comparison between the two scenes. In Marlowe's version, the excess of Jupiter's language, and his doting attendance upon Ganymede with promised and immediate gifts, reflects and prefigures Dido's obsession with Aeneas in the body of the play. Ganymede makes an appearance in Jonson's scene, too, and although Jupiter's immediate interest is apparently in Venus (Chloe), it is made clear that Juno also suspects Ganymede: '[*I*] *Pyrgus* [playing Ganymede]. Nay, today she [Juno] had me in inquisition too' (*Poetaster* IV.5.106).

The network of associations this sets up is suggestive. In *Dido*, Jupiter and Ganymede prefigure Marlowe's version of Dido and Aeneas; Jonson's Jupiter and Juno are played (within the play) by Ovid and Julia, who are then connected, by Virgil's recitation, to Dido and Aeneas.

[39] For the impact of this fact upon the erotic content and agency of Marlowe's play see Clare R. Kinney, 'Epic Transgression and the Framing of Agency in *Dido Queen of Carthage*', *SEL*, 40 (2000), 270–3.

[40] *Aeneid* I.26–8: 'manet alta mente repostum / iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae, / et genus invisum et rapti Ganymedis honores'.

[41] Compare *Iliad* XV.17–24 and *Dido* I.1.12–15.

These correspondences are further tightened if we remember that in his second book of the *Tristia*, as part of an ongoing (and vain) attempt to persuade Augustus to mercy, Ovid cites the popularity of exactly this section of the *Aeneid* ('non legitimo foedere iunctus amor') as evidence that even the loftiest poetry is at some level about love.[42] The scenes of farewell between Ovid and Julia in Act IV are moreover reminiscent of Marlowe in their verbal excess, and also allude, in Julia's repeated returns, to Ovid's leave-taking of his wife in *Tristia* III (as well as *Romeo and Juliet*). Perhaps most strikingly of all, the disrespectful banquet Jonson attributes to Ovid is a version of *Augustus'* 'dinner of the twelve gods' recorded by Suetonius, which, as Cain remarks, 'features prominently in Suetonius' list of the emperor's vices'.[43]

For all that Caesar sets up a pointed contrast between Ovid and Virgil, the correspondences continue to accumulate. The apparent contrast – but also the parallel – is marked out by Caesar's use of the same term – 'abstract' – in his lyrical vision of perfect poetry ('the most abstract and perfect', *Poetaster* V.1.19) as Ovid had used of Julia ('The court's the abstract of all Rome's desert, / And my dear Julia th' abstract of the court', IV.9.18–19). In a phrase reminiscent of Ovid's diction, Caesar goes on to describe Virgil himself as 'Rome's honour' (emphatically twice, V.1.69 and 71), and finally, more uncomfortably, identifies Virgil with himself: 'Welcome to Caesar, Virgil. Caesar and Virgil / Shall differ but in sound' (V.2.2–3). We can of course read this series of connections as evidence of Caesar's virtuous adoption of the kind of language which Ovid, in his elegiac fervour, has abused. But there is a further set of correspondences between Caesar and Marlowe – already associated with Ovid by the translation of the first scene – which may add to our unease.

In *Poetaster* V.2 Caesar is finally goaded – by Virgil's decorous refusal of the proferred chair – to a passionate denial not only of custom but of heaven and even of fate, *fatum*, that ruling power of the *Aeneid*: 'The course of heaven and fate itself in this [i.e. to raise Virgil over Caesar] / Will Caesar cross, much more all worldly custom' (V.2.35–7). Horace is quick to limit his statement to 'custom' alone (37–8) and Caesar adopts Horace's interpretation (39–47), but the boldness of the initial statement persists. Just for a moment, Caesar, who will not forgive Ovid for his misplaced passion or for his impersonation of the gods,

[42] *Tristia* II.533–6. The last two of these lines are quoted in the Latin commentary on Book IV in the edition cited in n. 35, above. Ovid makes the same point about the *Iliad* (*Tristia* II.371–4), among other works.

[43] *Poetaster*, ed. Cain, p. 16. Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*, 70.

sounds like Ovid himself ('O mighty Ovid! What the sway of heaven / Could not retire, my breath hath turnèd back', IV.10.90–1), but also like the Ovidian Marlowe's Jupiter or Dido, as they promise their lovers the power to 'Controule proud Fate, and cut the thred of time' (*Dido*, I.1.29).

But the comparison is perhaps not as fleeting as all that. In Virgil's humble but reluctant acquiescence (*Poetaster* V.2.11–13) we might hear an echo of Aeneas' unwilling but gracious opening to Book II of the *Aeneid*, but within this already 'Virgilian' framework, the resemblances between this scene and Aeneas' reception by Dido echo not so much (the historical) Virgil's text, as Marlowe's uncanonical rewriting of it. Despite substantial portions of direct translation, or close paraphrase, the complete effect of Marlowe's work is very different from its Virgilian prototype. In particular, the balance of material (as opposed to emotional) power between Dido and Aeneas – as between the child Ganymede and Jupiter in the opening scene – is profoundly unequal.[44]

Where Virgil's Aeneas is able to present Dido with a royal sceptre, crown, and necklace, Marlowe's Dido insists that Aeneas, impoverished as he is, should sit in her seat, leading to an almost comic wrangle about the propriety of her suggestion:

> *Dido*: Sit in this chaire and banquet with a Queene,
> *Aeneas* is *Aeneas*, were he clad
> In weedes as bad as ever *Irus* ware.
> *Aeneas*: This is no seate for one thats comfortles,
> May it please your grace to let *Aeneas* waite;
> For though my birth be great, my fortunes meane,
> Too meane to be companion to a Queene.
> *Dido*: Thy fortune may be greater than thy birth,
> Sit downe *Aeneas*, sit in *Didos* place …
> *Aeneas*: This place beseemes me not, O pardon me.
> *Dido*: Ile have it so, Aeneas be content …
> *Aeneas*: In all humilitie I thanke your grace.
> (II.1.83–99)

In *Poetaster*, Caesar's insistence, as soon as Virgil's arrival is announced, that a chair should be set for him at his right hand, 'where, 'tis fit / Rome's honour, and our own, should ever sit' (V.1.70–1) leads to a very similar dispute which verges upon the absurd. Caesar announces: 'See then this chair, of purpose set for thee / To read thy poem in: refuse

[44] In a pointed reversal of Virgil's account, Dido brings gifts to Aeneas, who is unable to reciprocate (compare *Aeneid* I.643–56); her wealth and paradoxical 'kingliness' accentuate Aeneas' emasculation.

it not' (V.2.24–5). Virgil articulates his unworthiness, with great self-consciousness, using the same categories – of birth and wealth – as does Marlowe's Aeneas, although by these criteria he is even less deserving than the hero he has created:

> It will be thought a thing ridiculous
> To present eyes, and to all future times
> A gross untruth that any poet, void
> Of birth or wealth or temporal dignity,
> Should with decorum transcend Caesar's chair.
> (*Poetaster* V.2.28–32)

The echoes of Aeneas' reception scene, in which Virgil, appropriately enough, is 'playing' Aeneas, cast Augustus as Dido, hardly a flattering comparison; but even less so when the Dido in question is not so much Virgil's noble but suffering queen as Marlowe's rapacious one – a Dido framed by and reflected in a lustful Jupiter in thrall to a boy. We should remember once again that both Jonson's play and Marlowe's were produced by the children's company: a cast composed entirely of pre- or barely adolescent boys, Kinney's 'troupe of Ganymedes'. The association between Jonson and Marlowe's scenes unsettles our response to both Virgil and Augustus.

Whose Virgil? Virgil and Horace in the Final Scenes

Despite the effusive tribute to him in *Poetaster* V.1, Virgil's 'distance' both from Horace and from Ovid/Marlowe is not as complete as Helgerson claims. There is certainly a kind of blandness to Virgil in *Poetaster*, an absence of character, both dramatically and allusively: aside from the (translated) lines of *Aeneid* IV, I cannot trace any of Virgil's lines to a source in the extant works of the historical Virgil. But Virgil's speaking 'voice' in the play is actively blurred beyond this kind of 'absence'. We have already seen how Virgil speaks 'Horace's' lines in V.3, and just as the Virgil of V.2 seems to enter into a rather un-epic version of his own epic poem, so is his artistic identity again confused in the final scene.

After Crispinus has vomited up all his curious vocabulary, Virgil prescribes for him a course of reading, a 'strict and wholesome diet' (*Poetaster* V.3.524), followed by instructions in writing, designed to prevent him from lapsing back into artistic failure (V.3.519–18). This concise *ars poetica* bears no relation to any of Virgil's extant works, but it does resemble quite closely certain sections of Horace's advice to poets in the *Satires*, *Epistles*, and *Ars Poetica*. As well as several specific correspondences, the tone of advice from an elder poet to a more

junior one is reminiscent of the epistles to Florus (*E* I.3 and II.2) and the Pisos (II.3, *AP*).

Both Cato and Terence (*Poetaster* V.3.525 and 528) are mentioned by Horace at various points; and Jonson's 'old Cato' corresponds to 'priscus', the adjective Horace twice uses to describe him (*E* II.2.117 and *C* III.21.11).[45] Of the Greek names Virgil invokes, four (Orpheus, Pindar, Callimachus, and Homer) are mentioned by Horace in a literary-critical context.[46] More significantly, the rhetorical move which rejects Plautus and Ennius in favour of Greek texts ('Shun Plautus and old Ennius', V.3.530) is paralleled in the *Ars Poetica*, where Horace urges the study of Greek models (*AP* 268–9) and claims in the same passage that both Ennius (260) and Plautus (270–1) are overrated.[47]

It is not only Virgil's advice on the literary canon that echoes Horace. The second half of his speech (*Poetaster* V.3.537–49) is concerned with good literary style, and again it bears comparison with similar passages in the literary-critical epistles. Virgil's advice centres upon judicious language, advising Crispinus to consider his 'matter' before individual 'words'. The advice is obviously relevant to Crispinus' demonstrated fondness for recondite vocabulary. But at *E* II.2.143 Horace too advises against seeking words (*verba*) without proper attention to the subject; similarly, at *AP* 40–4 he stresses that a well-chosen topic will naturally bring 'facundia' and 'lucidus ordo'. The necessity of sparing editing – 'But let it pass, and do not think yourself / Much damnified if you do leave it out' (V.3.543–4) – is another Horatian commonplace: compare *AP* 43–4 and 439–52 as well as *E* II.2.111–14 and 122–3. At *E* II.2.120, Horace claims that careful choice of words will allow the poet's verse to flow 'vehemens et liquidus', a similar claim to Virgil's promise: 'This fair abstinence / In time will render you more sound and clear' (*Poetaster* V.3.546–7).

Thus Virgil, the acknowledged master-poet, whom Caesar associates so strongly with his own power, reminds us of a Marlovian version of his own Aeneas upon his entrance, and then, in the closing scene of the play, sets Crispinus on the road to redemption with literary advice derived not from his own work, but from Horace's.

[45] Cato is also mentioned at *E* I.19.12–14 and *AP* 56; Terence at *S* I.2.20 and *E* II.1.59.

[46] Orpheus at *AP* 392, Pindar at *E* I.3.10 (as well of course as many allusions in the *Odes*), Callimachus at *E* II.2.100, and Homer at *S* I.10.52. The adjective *magnus* used of Homer in *Satires* 10 possibly corresponds to Virgil's 'high' at line 535.

[47] Plautus is similarly criticized at *E* II.1.171; Ennius, mentioned at *E* II.1.50, heads the list of early Roman poets whom Horace considers often overestimated, and his failings are also mentioned at *S* I.10.54 – a particularly resonant poem for *Poetaster*.

Caesar, Horace, and Poetic Immortality

At the disruption of the mock-divine banquet, Caesar's fury is in contrast to Horace and Maecenas' appeals for mercy ('O good my lord, forgive: be like the gods', *Poetaster* IV.6.59), and their tolerant response to the scene is confirmed by Horace's description of 'innocent mirth / And harmless pleasures, bred of noble wit' in refuting Lupus (IV.8.12–13). Norbert Platz accounts for the discrepancy between this and the apparently 'ideal' Caesar of the final scenes by confronting the possibility of inconsistency directly: 'Whereas in the earlier part of the play the Prince is the type of monarch whom Jonson as a poet actually had to cope with, at the end he becomes the ideal centre of a utopian realm, a kind of wishful projection into the future.'[48]

But we have already seen how the imagery of the emperor's 'open ear' places Caesar's judgement in doubt throughout the play; and in the final act, despite the apparent clarity of the distinction between Ovid/Marlowe's sensuous abandon and the virtuous excellence of Caesar and Virgil, their interaction seems for a few minutes to be scripted by Marlowe himself. Nor is this the only doubtful moment in the final scenes. As late as V.1 Caesar makes exactly the error of judgement that we know from the *Satires* Maecenas did *not* make when he first met Horace. Seeking opinions of Virgil, Caesar asks Horace: 'what sayest thou, that are the poorest, / And likeliest to envy or to detract?' (*Poetaster* V.1.77–8). At *S* I.6.62–4 Horace recalls of Maecenas: 'I consider it a great achievement that I pleased a man like you – a man who can tell the difference between the honourable and the base – not because of an eminent father, but because of a kind of integrity of life and character.'

Yet Act V begins with the beautiful verse of the first scene, a veritable concord of praise – of poetry, from Augustus; of Augustus, from the poets. Whatever doubts we harbour elsewhere, here Caesar's taste and judgement seems unimpeachable. But in a play so insistently in conversation with classical models, it is no surprise that the fluent poetry of this scene is also indebted to earlier texts; moreover, despite the great difference in tone between the mutual panegyric of V.1 and the satiric tenor of much of the rest of the play, several passages in this scene also have their origins in Horace, and in particular in the more mature Horace of the *Odes*.

Caesar's grandiloquent opening – 'We that have conquered still to save the conquered' (*Poetaster* V.1.1) – is usefully keyed by Cain to Virgil,

[48] Norbert H. Platz, 'Jonson's Ars Poetica: An Interpretation of *Poetaster* in its Historical Context', *Elizabethan Studies*, 12 (1973), 1–42 (p. 19).

Aeneid VI.851–3. Virgil's lines form part of Anchises' advice to Aeneas in the underworld, and although their relevance to the Augustan age is pointed, in the *Carmen Saeculare* Horace attributes a very similar kind of courtesy to the defeated to Augustus himself: 'clarus Anchisae Venerisque sanguis, / impetret, bellante prior, iacentem / lenis in hostem'.[49] Second, Augustus' description of the victory over Egypt in terms of eagles and their prey engages with two famous passages from the *Odes*.[50] At *C* I.37, describing the defeat of Cleopatra, Caesar is compared to a hawk in pursuit of doves: 'accipiter velut / mollis columbas' (17–18), and the triumphal panegyric of *C* IV.4, celebrating the Nerones' victories, begins with an extended Pindaric comparison of Drusus to a young eagle learning to hunt his prey. As Cain notes, Jonson's term 'quarried' similarly describes a hawk learning to hunt.

The praise of Caesar which follows also includes Horatian elements. Maecenas' 'worthiest prophets' (37), meaning poets, glosses the Horatian *vates*, familiar from several of the odes (*C* II.20.3; IV.6.44). The extravagance of Gallus' description of Caesar 'who addeth to the sun / Influence and lustre, in increasing thus / His inspirations, kindling fire in us' (41–3) echoes the solar imagery of Augustus which pervades *Odes* IV. The closest parallel occurs at *C* IV.5.6–8: 'instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus / adfulsit populo, gratior it dies / et soles melius nitent' ('when your face shines down like the spring upon your people, the day goes by more happily and the sun shines more brightly').[51] Finally, the motif of the deification of Caesar – implied by Horace's mention of 'Caesar's shrine' – finds many parallels in the *Odes*, although the suggestion that Phoebus himself might worship there is Jonson's addition.[52]

Most suprisingly of all, perhaps the most beautiful of Caesar's verse paragraphs conceals a reference to Horace so close to the original Latin that it is nearer a translation than an allusion:

> She [Poesy] can so mould Rome and her monuments
> Within the liquid marble of her lines
> That they shall stand fresh and miraculous,
> Even when they mix with innovating dust.
> In her sweet streams shall our brave Roman spirits
> Chase and swim after death with their choice deeds
> Shining on their white shoulders
> (*Poetaster* V.1.21–7)

[49] *CS* 50–2. The description of Augustus in terms of Anchises perhaps indicates that Horace himself had the passage of *Aeneid* VI in mind.
[50] The eagles are of course also the Roman standards.
[51] See also *C* IV.2.46–7.
[52] For a divinized Augustus, see *C* I.2.25–52, III.3.11–12, III.5.34.

For all the epic and imperial high-mindedness of this vision, line 27 is in fact a direct translation, not (as we might expect) of Virgil at his most high-flown, but rather from one of Horace's most explicit and sexualized odes, *C* II.5, describing not a manly Roman youth but a Greek-named girl: 'non Chloris, albo sic umero nitens' (line 18). Caesar's deft annexation of the language of poetic and political immortality preserves at its heart not an epic but a lyric demonstration of that immortality, and the boldness of the transformation alerts us to the Horatian material in the surrounding lines. Caesar is unwittingly proving his point, if not quite how he means it: this eroticized Horatian image will indeed survive, but the type of 'brave Roman' that it will preserve is as much Horatian as it is Augustan – indeed it is Horace's texts that will shape and mediate what 'Augustan' comes to mean.

The structural force of 'translation' in this play is central and pervasive. It is not just that the deployment of 'translated' texts – understood in its broadest sense – is much more extensive than previously noted; nor that this whole network of adaption and adoption is insistently placed within an Horatian framework, although both are the case. The concern of *Poetaster* with the connections between ethical and aesthetic excellence – and even the details of the kind of vice most to be avoided – is derived from Horace's *Satires*. More than this, the apparent 'idealism' of the depiction of Virgil and Caesar in the closing scenes is attenuated by the competing echoes in which it is communicated. The allusive dynamic of the play thus cuts both ways: Caesar's authority is undermined by the Horatian satiric 'voice', and even Virgil is given Horace's lines rather than his own, but it is Horace's voice too – the panegyric mode of the last book of the *Odes* in particular – which is heard in Caesar's eulogy of poetry, and the poets' of Caesar.

Sinfield remarks, regarding the use of classical models in the play, that they challenge Jonson and his audience 'to make sense of their own developing reality in newly emergent material conditions. *Poetaster* is not documenting the author function, it is helping to constitute it'.[53] I began this essay by noting that Jonson's strategies of translation in *Poetaster*, like Horace's *Satires* themselves, are at once aggressive and submissive, and this alternation is reflected in the work they do in the play. It is the multiple 'translations' of *Poetaster* – which at once subvert and create Augustan political and artistic power – that Virgil calls 'true'.

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[53] Sinfield, p. 11.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

A New Eighteenth-Century Juvenal Translator: William Popple's Satires VI and X

Stuart Gillespie

William Popple (1700/1–1764), a descendant of Andrew Marvell's sister, was like his grandfather and namesake a goverment official of the higher echelons and an occasional writer and translator.[1] He first published verse in 1726. Encouraged by Aaron Hill, he wrote two Cibberesque comedies which were performed on the London stage in the mid-1730s. His career as a civil servant had begun in 1723, and in 1737 he transferred to the Board of Trade and Plantations. In 1745 he became Governor of the Bermudas, remaining there until shortly before his death, apart from an extended visit to England in 1751–4. He published a translation of Horace's *Ars Poetica* in 1753, and a verse satire called *The Age of Dulness* in 1757. The former appeared under his own name while the latter was improbably ascribed to 'a natural son of the late Mr Pope'.

On his death Popple left behind him a number of unpublished works. They include further verse satires, a miniature epic on the history of the Jews, and a stage adaptation of Petronius' *Ephesian Matron*. The last is in the British Library, but a handsome folio preserved in the Bodleian Library contains the rest. MS Douce 201 is a leather-bound presentation volume in a uniform professional hand, a collection of Popple's poetical works transcribed at some unspecified date. Several of the items are explicitly attributed to him in ornamental title pages to individual works, and at one point, on the title page of *The Age of Dulness*, the date 1756 appears, forming a *terminus a quo* for the

[1] For details of Popple's life and writings further to what can be supplied here see C. R. Cropf, 'William Popple: Dramatist, Critic, and Diplomat', *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research*, n.s. 2 (1986), 1–17.